

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

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CINCPAC HONOLULU IMMEDIATE

USSAG NKP THAILAND IMMEDIATE

USDEL JEC PARIS IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BIEN HOA

AMCONSUL CAN THO

AMCONSUL DANANG

AMCONQSL NHA TRANG

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SAIGON 3464

EXDIS - MIL ADDRESSEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE.

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E.O. 11652: XGDS 2. DECLASSIFICATION DATE IMPOSSIBLE TO DETERMINE

TAGS: MOPS VS

SUBJECT: HIGHLIGHTS OF NVA OFFENSIVE-SUMMARY FOR PERIOD ENDING
NOON MARCH 25.

1. GENERAL.

DETERIORATION CONTINUED IN MR 1 DURING THE PAST 24 HOURS, AND
GENERAL TRUONG HAS ORDERED THE EVACUATION OF HUE AND QUANG NGAI.
I CORPS (FORWARD) HQ HAS BEEN EVACUATED FROM TAN MY PORT, AND
1ST DIVISION HEADQUARTERS HAS MOVED FROM HUE TO TAN MY IN PREPARA-
TION FOR EVACUATION TO DANANG, PROBABLY OVERLAND. LEAD ELEMENTS
OF GVN UNITS EVACUATING QUANG NGAI HAVE BEGUN TO REACH CHU LAI
AIR BASE. IN MR 2, TWO BATTALIONS OF THE 40TH REGT HAVE BEEN MOVED
FROM KHANH DUONG TO DIEN KHANH (BOTH DISTRICTS OF KHANH HOA) TO

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PROTECT NHA TRANG, AND THE 6TH AIR DIVISION FROM PLEIKU HAS

RELOCATED TO PHAN RANG AIR BASE. THE PLEIKU/KONTUM CONVOY IS STILL STALLED BY AN NVA BLOCKING ACTION 20 KM WEST OF TUY HOA. ITS REAR ELEMENT IS INCREASINGLY BELEAGUERED. IN MR 3, THE NVA HAS LAUNCHED SEVERAL ATTACKS ON THE RANGERS AT CHON THANH DISTRICT TOWN IN BINH LONG, BUT THE DEFENDERS HAVE BEATEN THEM BACK. MR 3 HEADQUARTERS LOST CONTACT WITH AN RF OUTPOST ALONG ROUTE 22 AFTER IT CAME UNDER ATTACK BY NVA FORCES EARLY MARCH 25, BUT MR 3 REPORTS IT WAS NOT A BREAKTHROUGH FROM THE FIGHTING ALONG ROUTE 26 TO THE NORTH. THE DELTA REMAINS QUIET.

2. MR 1.

THE SITUATION IN MR 1 CONTINUED TO DETERIORATE DURING THE PAST 24 HOURS. MR 1 COMMANDER LTG NGO QUANG TRUONG HAS ORDERED THE EVACUATION OF HUE AND QUANG NGAI, AND EVACUATION IS PRESENTLY UNDER WAY. MR 1 (FORWARD) HEADQUARTERS WAS EVACUATED FROM TAN MY PORT THE NIGHT OF MARCH 24-25, AND THE 1ST DIVISION HEADQUARTERS HAS MOVED FROM HUE TO TAN MY TO BEGIN EVACUATION OF ITS FORCES TO DANANG, PROBABLY OVERLAND ALONG THE COAST. EVACUATION FROM HUE IS PROCEEDING IN AN ORDERLY FASHION.

LEAD ELEMENTS OF GVN UNITS IN QUANG NGAI HAVE ARRIVED AT CHU LAI AIR BASE, AND SENIOR OFFICERS OF THE 2D DIVISION IN QUANG TIN ARE TRYING TO REGROUP THEIR DISPERSED UNITS AND MAKE THEIR WAY TO CHU LAI. THE TOTAL NUMBER OF REFUGEES IN DA NANG IS AT LEAST 500,000 AND REFUGEES CONTINUE TO POUR INTO THE CITY. THE MAINTENANCE OF PUBLIC ORDER IS BECOMING INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT.

3. MR-2.

TWO BATTALIONS OF THE 40TH REGT HAVE BEEN MOVED FROM KHANH DUONG DISTRICT TO DIEN KHANH DISTRICT (BOTH IN KHANH HOA) TO PROVIDE PROTECTION FOR THE CITY OF NHA TRANG. THE 1ST BN/40TH REGT IS SCHEDULED TO JOIN ITS SISTER BATTALIONS MARCH 27. THE 6TH AIR DIVISION, FORMERLY STATIONED IN PLEIKU, HAS RELOCATED TO PHAN RANG AIR BASE. PRESSURE ON THE 3D AIRBORNE BRIGADE, GUARDING THE DAU CAU PASS ON ROUTE 21 KHANH HOA, IS INCREASING.

THE REAR OF THE PLEIKU/KONTUM CONVOY IS INCURRING HEAVIER ATTACKS. THERE ARE FRAGMENTARY REPORTS THAT SON HOA DISTRICT TOWN HAS BEEN CAPTURED, AND RADIO CONTACT WITH THE TWO RANGER BNS FIVE KMS WEST OF THE TOWN GUARDING THE REAR OF THE CONVOY HAS

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BEEN LOST. THESE UNITS ARE ELEMENTS OF THE 6TH RANGER GROUP, THE ONLY VIABLE RANGER GROUP IN THE CONVOY. THE COMMUNIST BLOCKING ACTION 20 KM WEST OF TUY HOA REMAINS IN FORCE, AND THE CONVOY IS STALLED ABOUT 3 KMS SHORT OF THE BLOCK. CIVILIANS IN BINH DINH ARE BEGINNING TO EVACUATE THE PROVINCE. ACTIVITY ELSEWHERE WAS LIGHT.

4. MR-3.

IN MR 3, THE RANGER BN AND RF BN, WITHDRAWN FROM AN LOC TO CHON THANH, HAVE ARRIVED IN CHON THANH, AND HAVE WITHSTOOD SEVERAL INFANTRY ATTACKS SUPPORTED BY TANKS ON THE CITY. DEFENDERS CLAIM FROM 11 TO 17 NVA TANKS WERE DESTROYED, AND HEAVY CASUALTIES INFLICTED ON THE NVA. PRESIDENT THIEU HAS ORDERED THAT THE RANGERS AT CHON THANH BE AIRLIFTED TO LAI KHE IN LIEU OF THE PLANNED OVERLAND EVACUATION. RADIO CONTACT WITH AN RF OUTPOST ALONG ROUTE 22 WAS LOST EARLY MARCH 22, BUT THE MR 3 DEPUTY COMMANDER SAYS IT WAS NOT A BREAKTHROUGH FROM THE FIGHTING ALONG ROUTE 26. THE BATTLE ALONG ROUTE 26 HAS STABILIZED, AND BOTH SIDES HAVE SUFFERED HEAVY CASUALTIES. BIEN HOA AIR BASE WAS ROCKETED MARCH 25, WITHOUT CASUALTIES OR DAMAGE.

5. MR 4.

THE MILITARY SITUATION IN MR 4 REMAINS QUIET. MR 4 COMMANDER, MG NGUYEN KHOA NAM, PLANS TO USE RF TROOPS TO ADD A FOURTH BATTALION TO EACH REGIMENT OF HIS THREE DIVISIONS. DEPLETED RF UNITS WILL BE FILLED WITH UPGRADED PF SOLDIERS.

6. ICCS.

THE REMAINING ICCS TEAMS LEFT THE CHU LAI SITE BY LST THE NIGHT OF MARCH 24-25, AND DEPARTED THE HOI AN SITE MARCH 25. THE ONLY REMAINING TEAM SITES IN COUNTRY NOW MANNED ARE TAN AN (2 HUNGARIANS, 1 INDONESIAN, AND 2 IRANIANS), VUNG TAU (1 HUNGARIAN, 2 INDONESIANS, AND 1 IRANIAN), BIEN HOA AIR BASE (1 IRANIAN) AND KHANH HUNG (2 HUNGARIANS AND 2 IRANIANS). ALL REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS ARE MANNED, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF HUE AND PLEIKU.

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